



# DEBRA BOWEN

## CALIFORNIA SECRETARY OF STATE NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Nicole Winger  
(916) 653-6575

### Drug and Alcohol Testing Initiative Enters Circulation

***Drug and Alcohol Testing of Doctors. Medical Negligence Lawsuits. Initiative Statute.***

**SACRAMENTO** – Secretary of State Debra Bowen today announced that the proponent of a new initiative may begin collecting petition signatures for his measure.

The Attorney General prepares the legal title and summary that is required to appear on initiative petitions. When the official language is complete, the Attorney General forwards it to the proponent and to the Secretary of State, and the initiative may be circulated for signatures. The Secretary of State then provides calendar deadlines to the proponent and to county elections officials. The Attorney General's official title and summary for the measure is as follows:

**DRUG AND ALCOHOL TESTING OF DOCTORS. MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE LAWSUITS. INITIATIVE STATUTE.** Requires drug and alcohol testing of doctors and reporting of positive test to the California Medical Board. Requires Board to suspend doctor pending investigation of positive test and take disciplinary action if doctor was impaired while on duty. Requires doctors to report any other doctor suspected of drug or alcohol impairment or medical negligence. Requires health care practitioners to consult state prescription drug history database before prescribing certain controlled substances. Increases \$250,000 cap on pain and suffering damages in medical negligence lawsuits to account for inflation. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local government: **State and local government costs associated with higher net medical malpractice costs, likely at least in the low tens of millions of dollars annually, potentially ranging to over one hundred million dollars annually. Potential net state and local government costs associated with changes in the amount and types of health care services that, while highly uncertain, potentially range from minor to hundreds of millions of dollars annually.** (13-0016.)

The Secretary of State's tracking number for this measure is 1606 and the Attorney General's tracking number is 13-0016.

The proponent for the measure, Robert S. Pack, must collect signatures of 504,760 registered voters – the number equal to five percent of the total votes cast for governor in the 2010 gubernatorial election – in order to qualify it for the ballot. The proponent has 150 days to circulate petitions for the measure, meaning the signatures must be collected by March 24, 2014.

The initiative proponent can be reached at (510) 346-6200.

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